

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. (US 5,828,108) in view of Otomo al. (US 5,784,235).

Claims 24-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. in view of Otomo al. and Tan et al. (US 5,991,134).

Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for allegedly failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

The Japanese reference JP 11-505374 cited in the IDS filed on August 18, 2003 has not been considered on grounds that it fails to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(2).

Applicant's Election filed on February 9, 2005 is alleged to not correctly identify claims corresponding to the elected Group I, as identified in the Restriction Requirement dated January 10, 2005.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicant amends claims 20 and 24-26 and adds new claims 46 and 47 to further define the invention. Accordingly, claims 20-28, 46, and 47 are pending for reconsideration.

Applicant's Election

The Office Action alleges that Applicant's Election filed on February 9, 2005 does not correctly identify claims corresponding to the elected Group I, as identified in the Restriction Requirement dated January 10, 2005. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully acknowledges that claims 31 and 36 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Office Action alleges that Japanese reference JP 11-505374 cited in the IDS filed on August 18, 2003 has not been considered on grounds that it fails to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(2). Although Applicant respectfully asserts that MPEP 609(I)(A)(2) directs the Examiner to consider information which has been considered by the Office in a parent application, Applicant concurrently submits herewith another Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) that includes a legible copy of Japanese reference JP 11-505374. In addition, Applicant respectfully notes that an English-language Abstract of Japanese reference JP 11-505374 is currently unavailable, and thus, US 5,548,135, which is the priority document for Japanese reference JP 11-505374, is being provided as required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(3)(ii). Furthermore, Applicant includes a Notification of Reason(s) for Refusal issued by the Japanese Patent Office which clearly cites Japanese reference JP 11-505374 as being relevant to Applicant's Claimed Priority Document JP 11-213098, as required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(3)(i).

In addition, Applicant includes herewith a copy of the Examiner initialed PTO-1449 from the parent application that clearly demonstrates that Japanese reference JP 11-505374 was, indeed, considered by the Examiner in the parent application.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider Japanese reference JP 11-505374, as was done in the parent application, as well as US 5,548,135, by initialing the PTO-1449 attached with the IDS concurrently filed herewith and returning it with the next Communication from the Office.

If for any reason, the Examiner determines that the IDS concurrently filed herewith does not meet the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.98, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative in order to make a final determination regarding consideration of Japanese reference JP 11-505374 cited in the IDS concurrently filed herewith.

All Claims Comply With 35 U.S.C. 112

Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for allegedly failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Office Action alleges that Applicant's claimed *auxiliary wire* is "not connected to the transmission side of the active element." Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The Office Action alleges that "according to Fig. 4B, the inter-circuit signal wire (wire 12 in Fig. 4B) is connected to the bottom of the element 12AP, which means that the bottom part of 12AP is the transmission side of the partial region, while the auxiliary wire (wire 29 in Fig. 4B) is connected to the upper part of 12AP." However, Applicant respectfully asserts that there are no "upper" and "bottom" parts of the pMOS transistor 12AP since the diffusion regions of the pMOS transistor 12AP are simply source/drain regions along an entire length of the pMOS transistor 12AP.

Moreover, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 24, as presently amended, distinctly recites reception and transmission sides, wherein "a first transistor on a reception side, connected to said inter-circuit signal wire, in one of said two internal circuits," and "inter-circuit auxiliary wire is connected to one of a pair of power lines on a transmission side in the other of said two

internal circuits and said plurality of second transistors in said one of said two internal circuits.”

In other words, as clearly shown in the electrical schematic diagram of FIG. 4A and in the device layout diagram of FIG. 4B, the first transistor on a reception side in one of the two internal circuits is connected to the inter-circuit signal wire. Furthermore, the inter-circuit auxiliary in FIGs. 4A and 4B is clearly shown to be connected to one of a pair of power lines on a transmission side in the other of the two internal circuits and connected to the plurality of second transistors in the one of the two internal circuits.

For at least the above reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 24, as presently amended, complies with 35 U.S.C. § 112. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 be withdrawn.

In the event that the Examiner determines that the amendments made to claim 24 and Applicant’s above detailed remarks are not sufficient to withdraw the rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact Applicant’s undersigned representative to advance prosecution of Applicant’s instant application.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. (US 5,828,108) in view of Otomo al. (US 5,784,235), and claims 24-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. in view of Otomo al. and Tan et al. (US 5,991,134). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections as being based upon combinations of references that neither teach nor suggest the novel combination of features recited in independent claim 20, and hence dependent claims 21-28.

Initially, Applicant respectfully requests clarification regarding the exact listing of claims being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. in view of Otomo al. For example, although the heading of the rejection only recites claim 20 as being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. in view of Otomo al., the body of the rejection addressed features of claims 20-23.

Likewise, Applicant respectfully requests clarification regarding the exact listing of claims being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. in view of Otomo al. and Tan et al. For example, although the heading of the rejection only recites claim 24 as being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toyoda et al. in view of Otomo al. and Tan et al., the body of the rejection addresses features of claims 24-28.

Thus, Applicant respectfully requests clarification regarding exactly which claims are being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Toyoda et al., Otomo al., and Tan et al.

Independent claim 20, as amended, recites a semiconductor integrated circuit device having specific circuit layout structure including, in part, “an inter-circuit signal wire, different from said power lines, arranged to interconnect said two internal circuits, wherein said inter-circuit signal wire is not directly connected to said external signal input/output circuits,” and “an inter-circuit auxiliary wire, different from said power lines, connected to a static area near a location at which said inter-circuit signal wire is connected.”

In contrast to Applicant’s claimed invention, the inter-circuit signal wire 17 alleged to be disclosed as “gate electrode 17,” in FIGs. 2A, 2B, 4, and 6 of Toyoda et al. and the inter-circuit auxiliary wire alleged to be disclosed as “terminal VDD,” in FIGs. 4 and 6 of Toyoda et al. are

not connected according to the configuration recited by independent claim 20, and hence dependent claims 21-28.

Applicant further respectfully asserts that the Office Action does not rely upon Tan et al. to remedy the deficiencies of Toyoda et al. and Otomo et al. Moreover, Applicant respectfully asserts that the Office Action cannot rely upon Tan et al. to remedy the deficiencies of Toyoda et al. and Otomo et al. since Tan et al. is completely silent with regard to the relative configuration of inter-circuit signal and auxiliary wires, as recited by independent claim 20, and hence dependent claims 21-28.

For at least the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 20 is neither taught nor suggested by Toyoda et al. Otomo al., and/or Tan et al., whether taken alone or in combination. Thus, Applicant respectfully asserts that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn because the above-discussed novel combination of features are neither taught nor suggested by any of the applied references.

New Claims 46 and 47

Applicant respectfully asserts that new claims 46 and 47 are allowable for at least their ultimate dependence upon allowable claim 20, as well as the features that each of new claims 46 and 47 recite.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner believe that there are any issues

outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: June 15, 2005

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